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called "concentrating one's mind" upon the spirits, upon the details of the ritual, or upon the precise purpose to be accomplished. All other thoughts were to be rigidly excluded, they believed. This was the insistent admonition of the Winnebago elders to the youth who was fasting. He was to center his mind completely on the spirits, for his blessing would be in direct proportion to the power of concentration he was capable of. The Winnebago believed that the relation between man and the spirits was established by this concentration and that no manner of care in ritualistic detail could take its place. Very frequently failure on a warpath or lack of efficacy of a ritual was attributed to the fact that the Indian or Indians had been lacking in the intensity of their "concentration."

Offerings and sacrifices.—The theory of offering and sacrifice held by the Winnebago has been discussed before. To the important deities offerings were made at the great ceremonies. These offerings consisted of tobacco preeminently, buckskins, and whatever the particular spirit was supposed to like. The animal spirits were given their favorite foods—honey to the bear, for instance. Dogs were offered to Disease-giver at the war-bundle feasts. Whether human sacrifices ever existed it is difficult to say. In the tale of *Wegi'cexa* a child is offered to Earthmaker, and there is reason to believe that this may represent a survival of human sacrifice.

Tobacco could be offered at any time and was so offered to the various *genii loci* whenever an individual passed their precincts.

Prayers.—For examples of prayers reference must be made to the descriptions of the ceremonies. Among the Winnebago, and doubtless everywhere else, the objects of the prayer are always the socio-economic life values. What in these values is stressed depends upon the ambitions of the individual, and consequently it happens that individuals may pray for abstract blessings or ideal objects, although this is rare. Prayers are undoubtedly always accompanied by a religious feeling when made by the religious man, but frequently become mere formulas in the hands of the lay Indian.

The Folkloristic Concepts

The concept of evil.—It is extremely difficult to understand exactly what the Winnebago concept of evil is. They undoubtedly postulate the existence of evil and they have theoretically a host of evil spirits, the *wa.xop'i'ni cicik*. Youths will be warned not to fast at certain times and children will carefully be kept at home after dark for fear of the evil spirits. Yet in spite of all this, no even fairly definite idea of what these evil spirits are and what they look like can be obtained. One almost gets the impression that the notion of evil spirits belongs to an older strata of Winnebago beliefs and that what we find to-day

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776 is but a faint survival of former times. The older myths are full of references to the evil spirits, and the cosmological myths represent
[773] the world as infested with evil spirits who are on the point of exterminating the human race until the culture heroes come to the rescue. It would almost seem as if, from a purely matter-of-fact point of view, these early culture heroes had destroyed all the evil spirits. Certainly they are not regarded as of great consequence, for if they were we ought to find a certain number of prayers addressed to them asking them not to harm anyone. They seem to be mere bogies, personifications of fear, and that is perhaps why they are so intimately connected with darkness.

● 812 At the present time the vast majority of Winnebago ascribe evil, in so far as they explain it at all, to three causes: either to some
[688 failure on their part to perform a rite in the prescribed way, to
782] the fact that they have not invoked the spirits for protection (i. e., attempted to pass through life without the aid of the spirits), or to the evil machinations of other men. Often one derives the impression that they accept evil and do not try to explain it. It seems to be a trait characteristic of the Winnebago, and perhaps characteristic of other North American tribes, that explanations are developed for the positive aspects of things. Certainly it would require some thought on the part of a Winnebago to explain why a war party that had, in the opinion of the chief, all the necessary requirements for victory, should nevertheless be defeated. He would doubtless find some reason, after a while, but it would be an afterthought and would probably vary from individual to individual. In some cases lack of success would be ascribed to the fact that an individual had been misled by an evil spirit, but this is clearly a secondary explanation because the individual, when questioned, would admit that he had no way of telling whether this was so until he had failed in something. We base this statement on an actual instance.

776 There is some evidence to show that there may have originally existed among the Winnebago a belief that the spirits were neither good nor bad; that they could be either at different times. In two notable instances, that of Disease-giver and Water-spirit, this is true at the present time. The former deity is the only one to whom prayers are addressed beseeching him not to present to man his death-dealing side.

In the myths we find a definite incarnation of evil in the case of
[192] a spirit called *Herregu'nina*. The meaning of this word as given by a Winnebago, and which seems to be justified, is "he whose existence is doubtful." If this is an old Winnebago word it would confirm the view advanced above, that the Winnebago were not very much concerned about the evil spirits. There is, however, a possibility
[177] that *Herregu'nina* is, in part, a post-Columbian development due

105 at least, demand an equal exchange. The crux of the question then
771 was, who is to evaluate the human gift? The answer of the mat-
776 ter-of-fact man was both, the spirits and man. For that reason, he contended, risk and danger must always inhere in the human-god relationship and there was little that could be done about it except to take every precaution one could. This must be accepted. Such was life. Suffering and tragedy loomed large there and the relationship between the deities and man was part of it. The gods could, at best, only help man to keep his balance and maintain his sense of proportion. It had always been a human problem and always would remain one. A whole class of literature, the worak, dealt with this theme. The picture it painted was not too optimistic.

105 It was the priest-thinker who was the optimist. He attempted a
771 time-honored solution of philosophers, that of giving man some of
776 the attributes of divinity, in other words, a greater sense of fixity and
812 security, a greater degree of permanence, and some possibility of foreknowledge.

Winnebago philosophers seem to have attacked this problem repeatedly and suggested a number of solutions. According to one theory, gods and men had been equal in the beginning. At that time all existent beings could transform themselves at will into the one or the other *ad infinitum*. When, however, the world was to take its present shape, all the beings had to transform themselves permanently into the one or the other, into gods or into human beings.

Thus, at one time, man had actually partaken of the divine. This
105 was, of course, only divinity in retrospect, and was not of great
771 importance in developing divine stature for man now. Winnebago
775 thinkers, instead, fell back upon two universally accepted folkloristic beliefs, that in the immortality of the soul and that in reincarnation. The first, however, implied a complete and irretrievable separation from the earth and human beings. To be of any value in the task of developing divine traits for man, the soul, the permanent component of man which left him at death had to be bound, in some way, to the earth. This could best be done by reinterpreting the nature of death. This was done by having it merely imply no loss of personal consciousness at all but simply a temporary stumbling.